



U.S. Department of Justice

*United States Attorney
District of the Virgin Islands*

Federal Building & United States Courthouse

*5500 Veterans Drive, Suite 260
Charlotte Amalie
St. Thomas, Virgin Islands 00802-6424
Voice: (340)774-5757
Fax: (340)776-3474*

October 29, 2004

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

**NOVEMBER GENERAL ELECTION
District Election Officer for the Virgin Islands**

Acting United States Attorney Anthony J. Jenkins announced today that Assistant United States Attorneys Alphonso Andrews and Curtis Gomez have been appointed to serve as District Election Officers for the District of the Virgin Islands. Assistant United States Attorney Andrews is the point of contact for election fraud issues in the Division of St. Croix and Assistant U.S. Attorney Curtis Gomez is the point of contact for the Division of St. Thomas and St. John.

These appointments were made pursuant to a nationwide Department of Justice Voting Integrity Initiative previously announced by Attorney General Ashcroft. The purpose of this nationwide federal law enforcement program, which the Department has implemented during national general elections since the late 1960's, is to ensure public confidence in the integrity of the election process by strengthening and enhancing the Department's efforts to protect voting rights and to prosecute election crime throughout the country.

Acting United States Attorney Jenkins said,

Election fraud dilutes the worth of votes honestly cast. It also corrupts the essence of our representative form of government. As a crime against both the individual and the government, it will be dealt with promptly and aggressively.

As District Election Officers, AUSAs Andrews and Gomez will supervise any investigation and prosecution of election fraud matters in this District and coordinate the District's efforts with Department of Justice prosecutors in Washington, D.C. As part of their responsibilities as District Election Officers, AUSAs Andrews and Gomez, along with agents of the Federal Bureau of Investigation, will be on duty in this District on election day to receive complaints of election fraud. AUSA/DEO Andrews and Gomez can be reached by the public at (340)773-3920 and (340) 774-5757, respectively. The FBI also will have Special Agents available to receive allegations of election fraud on election day and they can be reached at (340) 777-3363.

Acting United States Attorney Jenkins emphasized that the jurisdiction of the U.S. Attorney's Office is generally confined to enforcement in the election of federal officers, such as the Delegate to Congress, and the enforcement of constitutionally and federally protected voting rights.

Acting United States Attorney Jenkins stated that most forms of election crime are easily recognized, such as voter bribery, voter intimidation, and ballot forgery. Other forms of election fraud are more subtle. It is, for example, a federal offense to seek out the elderly, the socially disadvantaged, or the illiterate for the purpose of subjugating their electoral will. Furthermore, every voter has the right to mark his or her ballot in private, free from the watchful eye of election partisans. Finally, it is a federal offense to conspire to injure or oppress any person in any territory in the free exercise or enjoyment of any right

or privilege secured by the Constitution or laws of the United States, for example by electronically, or otherwise, altering votes counted in an election.

Acting United States Attorney Jenkins said:

The detection of election fraud depends in large part on the watchfulness and cooperation of the American electorate. It is imperative that those who have been asked to participate in questionable election practices, or who have observed or have specific information regarding electoral corruption, make that information available immediately to my Office or to the FBI. The cooperation of this country's citizens in helping to protect the sanctity of the ballot box is crucial. It is also greatly appreciated.